

## Claims

1. An automatic cash accounting system for use in a healthcare enterprise, comprising:

5 a message processor for receiving message data including a first income amount value, representing cash income received during a first time period, an associated first income source identifier, and a patient identifier, said first income source identifier identifying one of a plurality of departments internal to said healthcare enterprise providing said associated first income amount value, said patient identifier identifying said one of a plurality of patients;

10 a data processor for processing said received message data for,

identifying an income account associated with said one of said departments based on said first income source identifier, and for updating said identified income account with said first income amount value to indicate said first income amount value received by said identified income account during said first time period; and

15 identifying a patient account associated with said one of a plurality of patients based on the patient identifier, and for updating said patient account with said first income amount value to indicate the first income amount received by said patient account during said first time period;

20 collating and combining data from at least one of a plurality of income accounts and a plurality of patient accounts to provide at least one of a first income amount total value and a second income total value, respectively, representing combined cash income for said departments and for said patients, respectively, during said first time period.

25 2. A system according to claim 1, wherein

the income amount value is a patient co-payment.

30 3. A system according to claim 2, wherein

said received message data is derived from a processing device associating a user selected income source identifier with said first income amount value; and  
said processing device provides cash register functions.

4. A system according to claim 1, wherein  
said first income amount value comprises a total income received by said one  
of said plurality of departments during said first time period.

5 5. A system according to claim 1, wherein  
said received message data identifies a plurality of individual cash transactions  
performed during said first time period and associated with a healthcare enterprise  
department, and said first income amount value comprises a total transaction income amount  
value for said first time period.

10 6. A system according to claim 5, wherein  
a transaction income amount value comprises a disbursement comprising a  
negative income amount value.

15 7. A system according to claim 5, wherein  
said received message data comprises a file.

8. A system according to claim 5, wherein  
an individual cash transaction comprises an electronic funds transfer.

20 9. A system according to claim 1, wherein  
said received message data identifies a plurality of individual cash transactions  
performed during said first time period and associated with a healthcare enterprise  
department, and said first income amount value comprises a transaction income amount  
25 value, and

    said data processor accumulates a plurality of individual cash transaction  
    income amount values for transactions performed during said first time period for said  
    healthcare enterprise department to provide a cumulative total value for said first time period.

30 10. A system according to claim 1, wherein  
    said source identifier incorporates an account number identifying said income  
    account associated with said one of said departments.

11. A system according to claim 1, wherein

5 said data processor updates an account for the overall healthcare enterprise in response to said first income amount total value representing combined cash income for said departments for said first time period.

12. A system according to claim 11, wherein

10 said data processor further updates an account for a plurality of healthcare enterprises including said healthcare enterprise in response to said first income amount total value representing combined cash income for said departments for said first time period.

13. A system according to claim 1, wherein

15 said data processor initiates generation of a report identifying at least one of,

(a) a total income received by individual departments of said plurality of departments during said first time period, (b) total income received by individual departments of said plurality of departments during said first time period deposited in a bank, and (c) individual cash transactions performed during said first time period by individual healthcare enterprise departments.

20 14. A system according to claim 1, wherein

25 said first time period comprises at least one of: (i) a day, (ii) a week, (iii) a month, and (iv) a year, and

20 said plurality of departments internal to said healthcare enterprise include at least two of, (a) a cafeteria, (b) a garage, (c) a shop, (d) a pharmacy, (e) a café or restaurant, (f) cashiers office, (g) a clinical department, (h) an outpatient department, (i) an inpatient department, (j) an imaging department, and (k) a laboratory.

15. An automatic cash accounting system for use in a healthcare enterprise, comprising:

a message processor for receiving a plurality of messages corresponding to a plurality of individual cash transactions performed during a first time period and associated with a healthcare enterprise department, and an individual message includes a transaction income amount value and an associated first source identifier, said first source identifier identifying one of a plurality of departments internal to said healthcare enterprise providing said associated transaction income amount value;

a data processor for processing said received plurality of messages for,

10 identifying an income account associated with said one of said departments based on said first income source identifier, and for updating said identified income account to indicate said transaction income amount value received during said first period,

15 accumulating a plurality of individual cash transaction income amount values for transactions performed during said first time period for said healthcare enterprise department to provide a cumulative total value for said first time period, and

collating and combining cumulative total values associated with a corresponding plurality of departments to provide a first income amount total value representing combined cash income for said departments during said first time period.

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16. A system according to claim 15, wherein

said received plurality of messages comprise a file, and said individual message is conveyed within said file.

17. A cash accounting system for use in a healthcare enterprise, comprising:  
a message processor for,

receiving message data including a first income amount value  
determining income received during a first time period and an associated first source  
5 identifier, said first source identifier identifying one of a plurality of departments internal to  
said healthcare enterprise providing said associated first income amount value, and

receiving message data including a second income amount value  
determining income received during said first time period and an associated second source  
identifier, said second source identifier identifying one of a plurality of organizations external  
10 to said healthcare enterprise providing said associated second income amount value; and

15 a data processor for collating and combining a plurality of first income amount  
values from a corresponding plurality of departments to provide a first income amount total  
value representing combined cash income for said departments for said first time period, and  
for collating and combining a plurality of second income amount values from a corresponding  
plurality of organizations to provide a second income amount total value representing  
combined cash income from said organizations for said first period.

18. A system according to claim 17, wherein

20 said first time period comprises at least one of, (i) a day, (ii) a week, (iii) a  
month and (iv) a year, and

said plurality of departments internal to said healthcare enterprise include at  
least two of, (a) a cafeteria, (b) a garage, (c) a shop, (d) a pharmacy, (e) a café or restaurant,  
(f) cashiers office, (g) a clinical department, (h) an outpatient department, (i) an inpatient  
department.

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19. A system according to claim 17, wherein

said data processor combines said first income amount total and said second  
income amount total to derive a value representing combined cash income for said healthcare  
enterprise during said first time period.

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20. A system according to claim 17, wherein

said plurality of organizations external to said healthcare enterprise include at least two organizations of, (a) a health maintenance organization (HMO), (b) an insurance company, (c) a patient, (d) a debt collection agency, (e) another healthcare provider enterprise.

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21. A system according to claim 17, wherein

said message data including said first income amount value is received from at least one of, (a) a cash register, and (b) a processing device with cash register functions.

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22. A system according to claim 17, wherein

said first income amount value comprises a total income received by said one of said plurality of departments during said first time period.

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23. A system according to claim 17, wherein

said message data identifies a plurality of individual cash transactions performed during a first time period and associated with a healthcare enterprise department, and said first income amount value comprises a total transaction income amount value during said first time period.

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24. A system according to claim 23, wherein

a transaction income amount value comprises a disbursement comprising a negative income amount value.

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25. A system according to claim 17, wherein

said received message data comprises a file.

26. An automatic cash accounting system for use in a healthcare enterprise, comprising:

a message processor for receiving message data indicating a plurality of individual cash transactions performed during a first time period and associated with multiple patients, and an individual message data item includes a transaction income amount value and an associated first income source identifier, said first source identifier identifying one of a plurality of patients providing said associated transaction income amount value;

5 a data processor for identifying an income account associated with said one of said patients based on said first income source identifier, and for updating said identified income account to indicate said transaction income amount value received by said identified income account during said first time period.

10 27. A system according to claim 26, wherein  
said received message data comprises a file.

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28. A system according to claim 26, wherein  
said received message data identifies medical insurance reimbursement income amounts for multiple patients, and an individual message data item includes a medical insurance reimbursement income amount value and an associated patient identifier, said 20 patient identifier identifying one of a plurality of patients providing said associated medical reimbursement income amount, and

said data processor identifies an income account associated with said one of said patients based on said patient identifier, and updates said identified income account to indicate said medical insurance reimbursement income amount value received.

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29. A system according to claim 26, wherein  
said data processor combines said transaction income amount value received with said medical insurance reimbursement income amount value received for said one of said patients, and updates said identified account to indicate said combined amount.

30. A system according to claim 26, wherein  
said received message data identifies a single medical insurance  
reimbursement income amount for multiple patients, and identifies a source organization of  
said reimbursement income amount, and

5           said data processor identifies an organization income account associated with  
said source organization, and updates said organization income account to indicate said  
medical insurance reimbursement income amount value received.